



Making it Clear:

A guide for teaching pronunciation



Centre for Excellence in Immigrant
and Intercultural Advancement

Introduction

Pronunciation is quite often overlooked in the language teaching field, despite the fact that it is an integral part of learning a language. English textbooks and instruction manuals do not adequately address the subject and many ESL professionals may be a little intimated by the prospect of having to teach pronunciation. However, just like almost everything else, if the process is broken down into smaller more manageable pieces, the task is not at all daunting. This manual has been designed to demystify the teaching of pronunciation and help you get started.

Department initiative

In 2008 the ESL department put forth an initiative to have the instructors of all of the full-time and part-time programs in the department place more focus on the teaching of pronunciation. In the average full time ESL classes, we are advocating addressing the pronunciation needs of our learners for approximately 4 hours a week. In a 6 hour a week part-time class this works out to be close to 1 hour and 15 minutes a week. In order to fulfill this initiative the department has created as much support as possible for the staff by providing various professional development opportunities in the form of workshops, new materials as well as this guideline. While our learning has been incremental, the ongoing development of skills in this area is our collective objective.

Rationale

It is necessary to teach Pronunciation because when most people meet an English language learner, the first thing that is noticed is their pronunciation. A person may have an excellent control of English grammatical structure and a vast vocabulary; however, if no-one can comprehend what they are saying, this will not matter. Pronunciation issues are often a large obstacle to our learner's future success and it is our responsibility as their English Instructors to give our learners the tools that they need to succeed. This has led the department to increase the amount of pronunciation taught throughout all levels and programs.

Explicit teaching of pronunciation concepts is necessary to create awareness in the learner. Without this awareness the learner cannot make changes in his/her own production. It should also be clear to the learner that the goal is not to eliminate their accent, but to improve their intelligibility. Instruction of pronunciation should also be integrated into the teaching of grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Between the explicit and integrated pronunciation approaches most instructors should be able to cover 4 hours of pronunciation instruction in a one week period.

Ex. Teaching grammatical structures such as inflectional endings and question formation lend themselves well to on the spot pronunciation lessons as well when new vocabulary is introduced, the stress pattern should be taught too.

The outline of the document is as follows**1. Introduction****p.1****2. Segmental Features (vowels and consonants)****p.3****3. Supra-segmental Features (stress and intonation)****p.8****4. Integrating Pronunciation****p.16****5. Language Specific Pronunciation Problems****p.19****6. Pronunciation Level Guidelines****p.24****7. Materials List****p.31**

Segmental Features

Vowels and consonants are the main segmental components. English doesn't have a simple sound to symbol correlation; therefore, phonetic transcription is often used.

Consonants

There are 21 written consonants in English; however, there are 25 consonant sounds. Some written consonants don't have their own distinct sound (c, x, q) and some sounds are not represented by a single letter (th).

Ex. The written letter **c** can have the sound of /s/ or /k/

The written the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ represent voiced and voiceless th.

There are several things to keep in mind when discussing consonants:

- voicing
- place of articulation
- manner of articulation.

Voicing

All consonants are either voiced or voiceless; voicing has to do the vibration of the vocal chords. With voiceless consonants there is no vibration and with voiced there is. Most English consonants have a voiced and voiceless pair. You can feel the voicing by placing your hand on your voice box and feeling for the vibration.

Ex. /p/ is voiceless and /b/ is voiced.

Place of articulation

The articulators are the main parts of the mouth that move when a consonant is pronounced. All consonants of North American English can be put in one of the following categories.

Bilabials – sounds that are produced by two lips - /p, b, m, w/

Labiodentals – sounds that are produced with teeth and lips - /f, v/

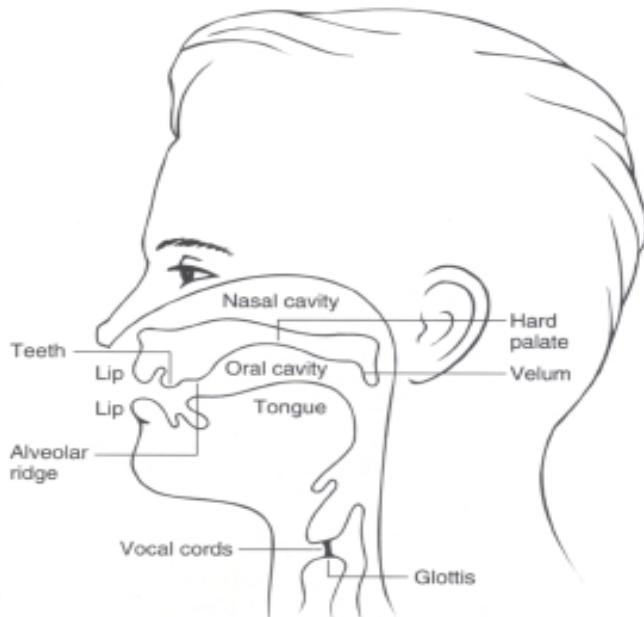
Dentals – the tip of the tongue is near the teeth - /θ, ð/

Alveolars –the tip of the tongue is on or near the tooth ridge /t, d, s, z, n, l/

Palatals – the tongue blade is near that hard palate - /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ, r, y/

Velars – the tongue is near the soft palate or velum- /g, k, ŋ/

Glottal- produced by air passing from the wind pipe through the vocal chords /h/



Manner of articulation

Manner of articulation primarily involves airflow.

Stops/plosives – the air is stopped completely before it is released.

Fricatives – the air flow can continue as long as there is air in the lungs.

Affricates – is the combination of a stop plus a fricative.

Nasals – the air flow is through the nasal cavity

← Manner or articulation →	Place of Articulation →	Bilabial	Labio dental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveo-palatal	Velar	Glottal
	Stop Voiceless Voiced	/p/ /b/			/t/ /v/		/k/ /g/	
	Fricative Voiceless Voiced		/f/ /v/	/θ/ /ð/	/s/ /z/	/ʃ/ /z/		/h/
	Affricate Voiceless Voiced					/tʃ/ /dʒ/		
	Nasal Voiced	/m/			/n/		/ŋ/	
	Liquid Voiced				/l/ /r/			
	Glide Voiceless Voiced	/hw/ /w/				/y/		

Note /θ/ represents voiceless th as in **bath**.
 /ð/ represents voiced th as in **bathe**.
 /ʃ/ represents sh as in **sheep**.
 /z/ represents zh as in **measure**.

/tʃ/ represents ch as in **church**
 /dʒ/ represents j as in **judge**
 /ŋ/ represents ng as in **riding**

Vowels

English has more vowels than most other languages in the world, North American English has 14. There are 2 kinds of vowels: tense and lax (basically long and short).

Short vowels - **I ε æ a ʌ ʊ**

(Pit, pet, pat, pot, putt, put)

Long vowels- **iy ey ay oy uw ow aw**

(feet, fate, fight, foil, fool, foe, foul,)

**Tip: In English spelling conventions long vowels are usually represented by 2 vowels, whereas short vowels are represented by 1.*

Diphthongs are long vowels that combine a vowel and a glide (y or w) together in the same

Some things that are important to know about vowels:

Front / central /back - the part of the tongue that moves

High/ mid/ low – the height of the tongue

Lip rounding is also important to be aware of when discussing vowels.

Ex. /iy/ is called a high front vowel because the front of the tongue is at a high position in the mouth. It is also unrounded because the lips are spread widely apart like a smile.

Resources		
Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds Easy • Pronunciation Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech • Pronouncing American English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Pronunciation for Immigrants • Accurate English

Schwa

/ Θ / Is very important for many reasons:

- Any vowel can become schwa
 - Θ is used approximately 34 % of the time
 - It is necessary for syllable and sentence stress
 - Without schwa English would have no rhythm
- Ex. In the word *celθeration* the second syllable is reduced to schwa

**Tip: When you can't identify a vowel in an English word it is usually schwa.*

Resources		
Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech from the Start • Pronunciation Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Pronunciation Made Simple • Basics in Pronunciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Advantage • Pronunciation in Use

Consonant clusters

A consonant cluster is the combination of two or more consonant sounds occurring together. Often these can cause many difficulties for ESL learners. They usually occur word initially or word finally.

Ex. Str, pl, st, sts,

Strong, plural, star, starts, tests

Flaps /Tap (r)

A flap occurs when a /t/ is pronounced as a /d/ in the following situations:

- after vowel: butter becomes burer
- after r: barter becomes barrer
- after l: faculty becomes faclury

Sometimes a flap can cause listening discrimination problems, for example:

metal / medal butting / budding kitty / kiddie

catty / caddy wetting / wedding beating / beading

**Tip: most learners are not aware that not using a flap in speech can mark their speech as foreign.*

Resources

<u>Intermediate</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech • Focus on Pronunciation 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Advantage • Accurate English (tap)

Supra-segmental Features

Syllables

It is very important for English learners to be able to divide a word into its syllables; this is necessary for the rhythm of the language.

What is a syllable?

It is a part of a word that contains a vowel sound; it could be alone or with consonants. It is not important how many written vowels there are in a word; rather the focus is on how many are pronounced.

Ex. Need- has 2 written vowels, but only one is pronounced, so it only has one syllable.
Canada has 3 syllables.

Syllable stress

There are 3 levels of stress that exist in English: Primary, secondary and no- stress. Syllable stress is very important for clear speech.

Unstressed syllables out number stressed syllables 3:1, stressed syllables are louder, longer and stronger; unstressed are quieter, shorter and weaker.

ə ə

Ex. **c**ommunity

Most unstressed syllables are reduced to /ə/ schwa; however, some syllables are so reduced that they are dropped entirely and this is called an **ellipsis or dropped syllable**.

Ex **camera** and **chocolate**

- In both of these words the second syllable is dropped in the pronunciation.

Movable stress patterns are when the primary stress moves based on the addition of suffixes and prefixes.

Ex. Photo photograph photographer

Resources		
Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation Pairs • Clear Speech from the Start • Focus on Pronunciation 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well Said • Clear Speech • Pronouncing American English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting Pronunciation • Accurate English • Sound Advantage

Sentence stress

Sentence rhythm influences listener comprehension the most.

Sentence rhythm is the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in speech.

Content words are **stressed** and **function words** are not **stressed**.

Content words → Nouns, main verbs, adjectives, adverbs, negative contractions, Wh- words

Function words → prepositions, articles, aux verbs, to be



Mary went to the store today.



Could you buy me a newspaper?

**Tip: It is important to remember that within content words syllable stress is still important.*

Resources		
Intermediate	Advanced	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech • Pronouncing American English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate English • Sound Advantage 	

Stress timing

English is a stressed timed language. The length of utterances doesn't depend on the # of syllables, but on the number of stresses.

YOU ME HIM HER (4 syllables total – 4 stressed syllables)

YOU and ME and HIM and HER (7 syllables total - 4 stressed syllables)

YOU and then ME and then HIM and then HER (10 syllables total - 4 stressed syllables)

YOU and then it's ME and then it's HIM and then it's HER (13 syllables total - 4 stressed syllables)

Even though each of these sentences has a different number of syllables, the time needed to say them is about the same because they have the same number of stressed syllables.

Resources

Advanced

- Sound Advice
- Targeting Pronunciation

Intonation

Intonation refers to the way the voice goes up and down when we are speaking. It can change the way our words are perceived and understood by listeners.

There are 4 basic levels of pitch in English:

- 1 – low (where the voice falls at the end of most sentences)
- 2 – normal (where the voice usually is)
- 3 – high (where the voice rises for the intonation focus or at the end of some questions)
- 4 – very high (strong emotions like fear or excitement)

As you saw while learning about word stress, all content words in a sentence are stressed.

Keep in mind that they are not equally stressed. There is always one content word that receives more stress than the others. Your voice tends to go up on this word. This word is the information focus

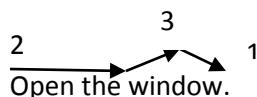
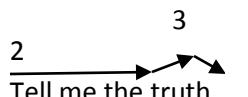
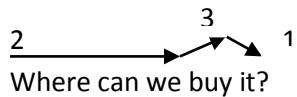


Ex. Joe went to the supermarket

Some common intonation patterns are:

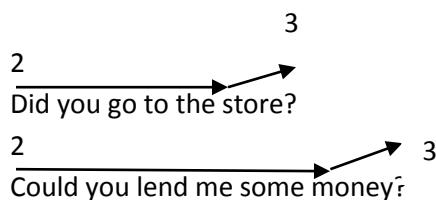
- Statements/Commands
- Wh-questions
- Yes/no questions/ Requests

Statements, Commands and Wh –questions all follow the 2-3-1 pattern.

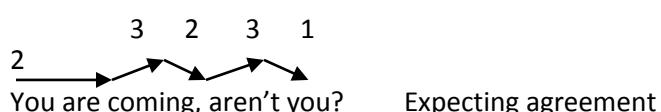
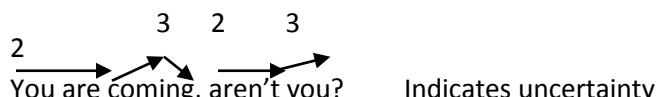
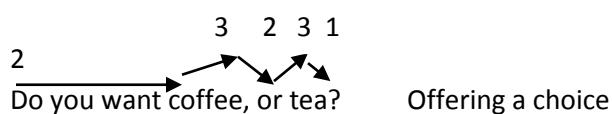
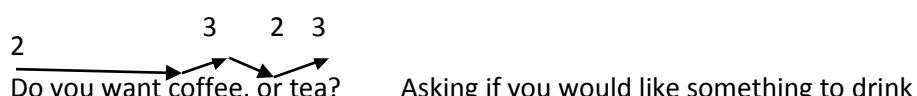
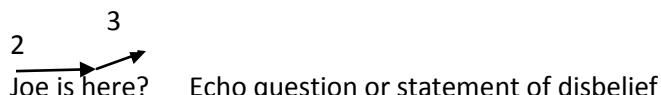
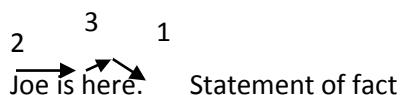


***Tip:** Where the voice goes up, marked by the 3 is the information focus

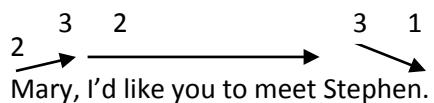
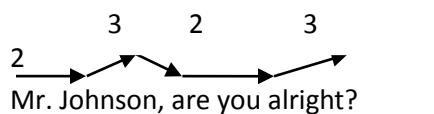
Yes/no questions and requests follow the 2-3 pattern



Intonation can change the meaning of the sentence.



When talking to someone while using their name or title usually rising intonation is used and the name has its own information focus.



**Tip: If your voice stays flat you will sound angry or annoyed.*

Resources		
Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech from the Start • Pronunciation Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech • Pronouncing American English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Advice • Accurate English

Contrasting new information

The speaker can break general intonation rules when they want to add new information

I found my **key**.

Which key?

My **house key**

Are you sure that it's not **my** house key?

This is mine, here's **your** house key.

When new information is added in a conversation the information focus will shift.

*The voice still follows the same rising and falling patterns it just happens at a different place depending on the new information focus.

The information focus can change based on which idea the speaker wants to emphasize.

Ex. Can I borrow this book for a **week**?

Can I borrow this **book** for a week?

Can I borrow this book for a week?

Can I borrow **this** book for a week?

Can I **borrow** this book for a week?

Resources	
Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rhythm of English • Pronouncing American English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Advantage • Accurate English

Thought groups

Thought groups can affect the rhythm and flow of English

A thought group is a group of words that belong together. It can be a short sentence or part of a long sentence. In writing we often use punctuation to achieve the same effect.

A pause or change in pitch can often signal the end of a thought group. Pauses in spoken English usually occur:

- Before punctuation marks
- Before conjunctions or other connecting words
- Between grammatical units such as phrases, clauses, and sentences

Ex. I would like 5 apples/, and 6 oranges.

When you arrive/, call me/, and I'll come get you

*/ indicates where a pause would occur.

We often use pauses with numbers

Ex. phone numbers

403 – 555 – 1234

math problems

(3x3) + 5 = what?

Resources	
Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech • The Rhythm of English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate English • English Pronunciation in Use (Advanced)

Linking

English speakers link words in grammatically-related groups. This linking results in a smooth transition from one word to another within that group. The grouping of words helps to convey the meaning more clearly.

There are 3 kinds of linking:

Consonant-consonant

ex. with_them

Consonant-vowel

ex. charge_it

Vowel-vowel

ex. May_I

Consonant-Consonant - we link together like consonants and stop consonants.

- I spoke_to Mary's teacher about_the homework_problem.

Consonant-Vowel – the final consonant links to the initial vowel of the next word

- I bought_a new hat at_a store in_Atlanta.

***Tip:** Try not to over pronounce the first consonant so that you can hear the

Vowel-Vowel - we blend the vowel glide of the first word onto the second.

- How_are you doing?

The linking between vowels should be very smooth.

***Tip:** Try to "drag" the final consonant to the vowel that follows

Blending

When some sounds are linked together the blending of the 2 sounds creates an additional sound.

D +Y =j

Ex. Would_you mind?

j

Could_you help me?

j

T + Y = ch

Ex. What about_you?

ch

Tell me what_you want.

ch

Resources

Beginner

- Clear Speech From the Start
- Pronunciation Pairs

Intermediate

- English Grammar in Use Intermediate
- Pronunciation Plus

Advanced

- Accurate English
- Better English Pronunciation for Immigrants

Inflectional Endings

The pronunciation of the ed and s endings is often taught when the structure is taught; however, it is frequently still a problem for higher level students.

The 3rd person or plural s

es is pronounced as /əz/ after s, z, sh, ch, j, and zh

Ex. wishəz, pagəz, classəz

s is pronounced as /s/ after voiceless sounds

Ex. wants and books

s is pronounced as /z/ after voiced sounds

Ex. dads and believes

The past tense ed

ed is pronounced /əd/ after t and d

Ex. wantəd and needəd

ed is pronounced as /t/ after voiceless sounds

Ex. talkt and stoppt

ed is pronounced as /d/ after voiced consonants

Ex. happened and believed

*If the ending is linked you may not hear the consonant

Ex. He talked_too much.

Resources		
Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Pronunciation Made Simple • Clear Speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate English • Better English Pronunciation for Immigrants

Integrating Pronunciation

A combination of explicit and integrated teaching of pronunciation is highly recommended to create a more holistic teaching environment. A concept should be explicitly taught initially to create awareness; however, once that has been done, it can be weaved into all areas of teaching.

The teaching of **Grammar** lends itself very well to the teaching of pronunciation. The following are some examples of creating teachable pronunciation moments through grammar instruction:

- Many teachers start their term off with a verb tense review. This creates a good opportunity to review the pronunciation of the **ed** and **s** inflectional endings.
- Both verb tense review and modal instruction serve as a fantastic gateway to discuss the pronunciation of contractions.
- When talking about phrasal verbs it is an opportune time to mention that the stress is always on the particle.
- When the topics of articles and prepositions arise, it is a great time to mention that they are function words; therefore, are not stressed.
- Yes/ No questions, Wh- questions, and Tag questions each have their own intonation patterns.

With regards to **reading**, there are many ways that pronunciation can be emphasized. The following are some suggestions for how you can tie it in:

- When introducing new vocabulary, it is a great time to practice counting syllables and examine the stress pattern of the word. After the first few times this will become a habit for the students every time they learn a new word.
- Before reading a passage out loud have the students mark it for whatever you are working on, e.g. Stress, linking and thought groups. Once they have marked it have them read it out loud focusing on the concept you are working on.

Listening and Speaking lessons provide a great opportunity to deal with pronunciation issues. For example:

- While the class is in listening lab, once they have finished the task, allow them to listen again and look for words that are linked together or listen for a specific sound that you have been working on.

- Another idea is to use the tape script, and have them read out loud and compare their own voice to the recording.
- Dictations can also provide a great opportunity to have the learners listen for a particular structure or sound.
- Using dialogues and role plays that focus on a certain point or sound can also be really be helpful
- While preparing for class presentations, have the learners work on the stress patterns and intonation patterns of what they want to say.

Pronunciation can be incorporated into Writing, through spelling.

- Students should try to sound out the words that they don't know how to spell. Learning to associate the sound with the symbol can be beneficial in many aspects of learning English.
- Most pronunciation books cover a list of spelling rules that may be useful for your students to learn.

Planning a lesson

It is difficult for many instructors to imagine how to fit 4 hours of pronunciation into an already busy week. Well it is actually not as intimidating as it sounds.

Many of us spend a considerable amount of time teaching grammar and vocabulary and anyone would agree that these are important things to teach. What good would it serve to have perfect grammar if people can't understand you? In a 5 day period you could actually spend at least 2 hours of your pronunciation time just by incorporating it into these two areas and in no time you have completed 4 hours of pronunciation work, if not more. Below is a sample of how easy it is to incorporate it into your regular teaching.

Example Weekly Lesson plan

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
12:30 -1:00 Discussion questions	12:30 – 1:15 Computer Lab <i>(pronunciation power 10 – 45 mins)</i>			
1:00 -1:45 Grammar wh- question formation <i>(intonation pattern 10 mins)</i>	1:15 – 2:00 Review Homework and Continue with Wh – questions <i>(intonation pattern 10 mins)</i>			
1:45 – 2:00 Pre-listening Discussion and vocabulary	2:00- 2:30 Pronunciation lesson about schwa (30 mins)			

<i>(count syllables and mark stress 10 mins)</i>				
2:00 – 2:45 Listening lab	2:30 – 2:45 Coffee Break			
2:45 – 3:00 Coffee Break	2:45 – 3:15 Vocabulary practice <i>(count syllables and mark stress 10 mins)</i>			
3:00-4:00 Reading and questions <i>(Read out loud and have students repeat after you 10 mins)</i>	3:15 – 4:00 Newspaper groups – read and retell.			
4:00 – 5:00 Class presentations	4:00 – 5:00 Class presentations			

Language Specific Pronunciation Problems

The pronunciation problems that our learners face are largely due to interference from their first language. English contains some sounds that other languages don't have and vice versa. English is a stressed timed language and many languages are not, as well intonation and stress patterns are often very different.

There are some problems that are common across most language groups. For example our vowel system is much more complex than most other languages, especially the short vowels.

The following are issues that particular languages have with English Pronunciation:

Arabic

- /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /t/ and /d/ respectively /(**bath** as **bat** and **this** as **dis**)
- /r/ is rolled
- /w/ sounds like /v/ (**will** as **vill**)
- /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are pronounced as /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ respectively (**catch** as **cash** and **age** as **azh**)
- /ŋ/ is pronounced as /nk/ (**thing** as **think**)
- Often try to stress /ə/
- Have difficulty with movable stress patterns and the idea that changing the stress pattern can change the meaning like in noun verb pairs.(**present** and **present** and **photo**, **photograph** and **photography**)

Cantonese

- /θ/ sounds like /f/, /ð/ sounds like /d/ (**this** as **dis** or **bath** as **baf**)
- /r/ and /l/ or syllable-initial /l/ and /n/ confusions (**night** and **light**)
- final consonant sounds dropped (**cat** as **ca**)
- no linking between words that 'go together' in phrases

Dinka

- /f/ and /v/ are pronounced as /p/ and /b/ (**fun** as **pun**)
- They don't have the sounds /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/,
- They have 'breathy' vowels that are completely different from English vowels
- Dinka is a tonal language which means that they use pitch to indicate lexical or grammatical changes, unlike English which uses pitch in intonation to convey feeling or attitude

Farsi

- Farsi speakers often have difficulty with /θ/ and /ð/ sounding like /t/ and /d/ (**bath as bat and this as dis**)
- /w/ sounds like /v/ (**what as vhat**)
- /z/ is pronounced as /s/ (**zipper** for zipper)
- Sometimes roll /r/ too much
- /tʃ/ is pronounced as /ʃ/ (**catch as cash**)
- The /g/ is too strong in /ŋ/ (**strong** will have a heavy **g** sound)
- Often try to stress /ə/
- Difficulty with short vowels
- Insertion of /ə/ in words that begin with the consonant clusters that start with an /s/ ex. /st-/ , /sp-/ , /sk-/ (**special** as **especial**)
- Unlike English, stress patterns are highly predictable and usually fall on last syllable.

French

- Have confusion between /r/ and /w/ (**ring** as **wing**)
- Have problems with /h/ may delete it (**happy** as **appy**)
- French Canadians often have difficulty with /θ/ and /ð/ sounding like /t/ and /d/ (**bath** as **bat** and **this** as **dis**)
- Other French speakers may replace /θ/ and /ð/ with /s/ and /z/ (**bath** as **bas** or **this** as **zis**)
- In French all words that are 2 syllables or longer stress the last syllable, whereas English stress patterns vary. This is even more confusing in words that are similar to English.
- Unstressed syllables are not reduced in length.

Japanese

- /l/ and /r/ (**lounge** may be pronounced as **rounge**)
- /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /s/ and /z/ respectively (**bath** as **bas** or **this** as **zis**)
- final /n/ not pronounced accurately
- /er/ sounds like /ar/ (**helper** as **helpar**)
- Syllables are generally the same length
- no linking between words that ‘go together’ in phrases
- absence of /w/ before /u/ so that ‘would’ sounds like ‘ud’
- /g/ may be pronounced as /ŋ/ between vowels (**bigger** as **binger**)
- Have difficulty with English consonant clusters
- Japanese speakers may have difficulty reducing function words and may now hear them with native English speakers reduce them.
- Does not manipulate intonation patterns based on new information.

Korean

- /l/ and /r/
- /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /s/ and /z/ respectively OR /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /t/ and /d/ (**bath** as **bas** or **bat** or **this** as **zis** or **dis**)
- /ə/ is inserted at the end of words with voiced sounds ('bridge' sounds like 'bridgy')
- /f/ and /p/ are interchanged especially in initial word/syllable positions (**apple** as **affle**)
- /æ/ sounds like /ɛ/ (**sand** sounds like '**send**)
- no linking between words that 'go together' in phrases
- absence of /w/ before /ʊ/ so that 'would' sounds like 'ud'
- Doesn't use word or syllable stress at all. Due to this, Korean speakers often sound flat.

Mandarin

- /v/ sounds like /w/ or /f/ (**invite** as **invite** or **infite**)
- /l/ and /r/ confusion (**fried** pronounced as **flied**)
- /l/ and /n/ confusion in speakers from southern China (**night** and **light**)
- /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /s/ and /z/ respectively (**bath** as **bas** or **this** as **zis**)
- /ɛ/ sounds like /eɪ/ (**gate** for **get**)
- no linking between words that 'go together' in phrases
- insertion of /ə/ when one consonant ends a syllable and the next syllable starts with consonant (**cupcake** as **cup ə cake**)
- /h/ in initial position is a harsh sound (for speakers from the northern part of the country)
- Reduced syllables are less common (don't **pronounce schwa**)
- It is a tonal language and pitch only represents change in the meaning of a word not a sentence
- Sentence intonation doesn't really exist; therefore English intonation patterns are difficult for Mandarin speakers.

Punjabi

- /p/ is often used in place of /f/ (**fun** as **pun**)
- /b/ or /w/ in place of /v/ (**berry, wary** for **very**)
- /w/ sounds like /v/ (**vent** for **went**)
- /θ/ sounds like /t/, /ð/ sounds like /d/ ((**bath** as **bat** and **this** as **dis**)
- /dʒ/ is pronounced as /dz/ (**dzoy** for **joy**)
- Slightly rolled /r/
- Weak /r/ with vowels (**caw** for **car**)
- Difficulty with short vowels
- Syllable timed language (**English is stress timed**)
- Different stress patterns
- Different intonation pattern meanings (**For English speakers rising at the end of a statement indicates a question, whereas for Punjabi Speakers it expresses surprise**)

Russian

- /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /s/ and /z/ respectively (**bath** as **bas** or **this** as **zis**)
- /w/ sounds like /v/ (**what** as **vhat**)
- /r/ is rolled too much
- /ŋ/ is pronounced as /nk/ (**thing** as **think**)
- /z/ is often pronounced as /s/ (**buzz** as **bus**)
- /θ/+/s/ or /ð/= /z/ are very difficult to pronounce (ex. **Months** or **clothes**)
- Difficulty with short vowels
- Tend to stress function words like **as, than, can** etc...
- Instead of using **rising** intonation for yes/no questions Russian speakers tend to **fall** which may sound rude.
- Falling intonations isn't low enough.

Spanish

- /r/ is a rolled /r/ (like the /r/ in the Scottish dialect of English) and should not have this feature
- /θ/ and /ð/ sound like /t/ and /d/ respectively (**this** as **dis** or **bath** as **bat**)
- /ʌ/ sounds like /ʊ/ (**culture** sounds like **coolture**)
- final /m/ = /n/ (**I am fine** as **I an fine**)
- final /n/ = /ŋ/ (**happen** as **happeng**)
- insertion of /ə/ in words that begin with /st-/, /sp-/, /sk-/ (**special** as **especial**)
- difficulty between /iy/ and /I/ ('leave' and 'live')
- final consonant sound dropped(**hard** pronounced as **har or work** as **wor**)
- /h/, particularly in word-initial position is very harsh (speakers from Spain, not Latin America)
- no linking between words that 'go together' in phrases

Urdu

- /θ/ sounds like /f/, /ð/ sounds like /d/((**bath** as **bat** and **this** as **dis**)
- /tʃ/ is pronounced as /ʃ/ (**cheese** as **sheese**)
- /w/ sounds like /v/ (**vent** for **went**)
- Slightly rolled /r/
- /dʒ/ is pronounced as /dz/ (**dzoy** for **joy**)
- Difficulty with vowels
- Syllable timed language (**English is stress timed**)
- Different stress patterns
- Different intonation pattern meanings (**For English speakers rising at the end of a statement indicates a question, whereas for Urdu Speakers it expresses surprise**)

Vietnamese

- Vietnamese has fewer final consonants than English, Vietnamese speakers often drop the final consonant.
- have difficulty with consonant clusters
- /t/ and /k/ are perceived as /d/ and /g/ respectively (**Toe** as **doe** and **cow** as **gow**)
- /θ/, which is confused with /t/ or /s/ (**bath** as **bas** or **bat**)
- /ð/, which is confused with /d/ or /z/ (**this** as **dis** or **zis**)
- /p/, which is confused with /b/ (**pat** as **bat**)
- /dʒ/, which is confused with /z/ (**zoo** as **joo**)
- /ʒ/, which is confused with /z/ or /dʒ/ (**measure** as **meazure** or **meajure**)
- /s/, which is confused with /ʃ/ (**wash** as **was**)
- /ɪ/, which is confused with /i/(**bit** and **bite**)
- Difficulty with short vowels
- Vietnamese is a tonal language and often speakers try to replace English intonation with tones.

**All speakers of the above languages will not necessarily have all of these difficulties.*

**For more information on this topic please refer to:*

Learner English 2nd edition by Michael Swan & Bernard Smith (Cambridge, 2001)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-native_pronunciations_of_English

Pronunciation Level Guidelines

Low Beginner (CLBs 1-2)		notes
Introduction to vowels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long vs. short • Articulation of sounds 	
Long vowels	/ɪ/, /e/, /ay/, /oy/, /uw/, /ow/, /aw/ (2 vowel rule)	
Short vowels	/ɪ/, /ɛ/, /æ/, /a/, /ʌ/, /ʊ/ (1 vowel rule)	
Introduction to consonants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on problem sounds. (focus may vary depending on class makeup) 	
Introduction to syllables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating words into syllables • Counting syllables 	
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pitch of the voice goes up at the end of yes/no questions 	
Inflectional Endings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural and present tense s-endings 	

*Bolding indicates new information to be introduced

*Material covered should be based on student need

High Beginner (CLBs 2-3)		notes
Introduction to vowels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long vs. short • Articulation of sounds 	
Long Vowels	/ɪ/, /e/, /a/, /ɔ/, /u/, /ɔ:/, /ə/ (2 vowel rule)	
Short Vowels	/ɪ/, /ɛ/, /æ/, /a/, /ʌ/, /ʊ/ (1 vowel rule)	
Introduction to Consonants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on problem sounds. (focus may vary depending on class makeup) 	
Linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consonant - vowel 	
Introduction to Syllables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating words into syllables • Counting syllables 	
Introduction to syllable stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strongest syllable/ Primary stress • The stress patterns of numbers 	
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising intonation of yes/no questions • The rising and falling intonation of statements 	
Inflectional Endings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural and present tense s-endings • Past tense ed- endings 	

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Low Intermediate (CLBs 3-4)		Notes
Vowels	Review of short and Long Vowels	
Consonants	Review of problem sounds (may change based on class make up)	
Consonant deletion	Silent letters	
Linking	Consonant – vowel Consonant - consonant	
Syllable Review	Identifying and counting syllables	
Syllable stress	Primary stress Unstress -schwa	
Sentence Stress	Content words and function words	
Contractions	Contractions with be, have, would	
Intonation	Rising in yes/no questions Rising/ falling in statements non- final intonation	
Inflectional Endings	Plural and present tense s- endings Past tense ed- endings	

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*Material covered should be based on student need

High Intermediate (CLBs 4-5)		Notes
Vowels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of short and Long Vowels • Articulation of sound 	
Consonants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of problem sounds (may change based on class make up) 	
Linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consonant – vowel • Consonant – consonant • Vowel – vowel 	
Syllables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and counting syllables • Dropped syllables 	
Syllable Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary stress • Unstress –schwa • Noun-verb pairs • Phrasal verbs 	
Sentence stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content words and function word • Information focus 	
Contractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractions with be, have, would • Negative contractions 	
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising in yes/no questions • Rising/ falling in statements • non- final intonation • Tag questions 	
Inflectional endings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural and present tense s- endings • Past tense ed- endings 	

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Low Advanced (CLBs 5-6)		Notes
Vowels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of short and Long Vowels 	
Consonants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of problem sounds (may change based on class make up) 	
Linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consonant – vowel • Consonant – consonant • Vowel – vowel • Blending (t+y=ch, d+y=j) 	
Syllables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and counting syllables • Dropped syllables 	
Syllable Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary stress • Unstress –schwa • Noun-verb pairs • Phrasal verbs 	
Sentence stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content words and function word • Information focus 	
Stress Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length depends on # of stressed syllables 	
Contractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractions with be, have, would • Negative contractions 	
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising in yes/no questions • Rising/ falling in statements • non- final intonation • Tag questions • Change in Meaning 	
Inflectional endings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural and present tense s- endings • Past tense ed- endings 	
Thought Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pausing with numbers, math problems , and lists 	

*Bolding indicates new information to be introduced

High Advanced (ENP/EAP CLB 7-8)		Notes
Vowels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of short and Long Vowels 	
Consonants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of problem sounds (may change based on class make up) 	
Linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consonant – vowel • Consonant – consonant • Vowel – vowel • Blending (t+y=ch, d+y=j) 	
Syllables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and counting syllables • Dropped syllables 	
Syllable Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary stress • Unstress –schwa • Noun-verb pairs • Phrasal verbs • Movable stress patterns 	
Sentence stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content words and function word • Information focus 	
Stress Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length depends on # of stressed syllables 	
Contractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractions with be, have, would • Negative contractions 	
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising in yes/no questions • Rising/ falling in statements • non- final intonation • Tag questions • Change in Meaning • Manipulating Information focus 	
Inflectional endings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural and present tense s-endings • Past tense ed- endings 	
Thought groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pausing numbers, math problems , and lists • Pausing with phrases and clauses 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using falling pitch to signal a thought group	
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*Bolding indicates new information to be introduced

*Material covered should be based on student need

Materials List

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech: From the Start • Sounds Easy • From Sound to Sentence • Pronunciation Pairs • Focus on Pronunciation 1 • Beginning Consonant Workbook • Beginning Vowel Workbook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Speech • Pronunciation Plus • Pronouncing American English • Focus on Pronunciation 2 • Well Said Intro • English Pronunciation In Use (Intermediate) • English Pronunciation Made Simple • Basics In Pronunciation • Accent on Canadian English • The Rhythm of English • Intermediate Consonant Workbook • Intermediate Vowel Workbook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate English • Better English Pronunciation for Immigrants • Targeting Pronunciation • Focus On Pronunciation 3 • English Pronunciation in Use (Advanced) • Sound Advantage • Advanced Consonant Workbook • Advanced Vowel Workbook

Reference Guides for teachers

- Teaching Pronunciation
- How to Teach Pronunciation
- Pronunciation Practice activities

Useful Websites

<http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Pronunciation/>
<http://www.manythings.org/lar/>
<http://www.pronunciation.com/Intonation>

<http://inogolo.com/index>
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/#>
<http://www.rachelsenglish.com/>

Action Plan

The department is advocating the incorporation of 4 hours of pronunciation into your weekly full time lesson plan. For many instructors this is a new experience and it may be beneficial to make an action plan, which outlines the goals that you would like to reach with regards to teaching pronunciation. This will also serve as a document that can be presented at your next PA to show the progress that you have made towards this initiative.

What is my area for improvement?	How will I reach it? / How long will it take?	What was the outcome?
1.		
2.		
3.		

4.		
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References

- Bjerke, L. (2008) *Accent on Canadian English*. Canada: Optima Communications Inc.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. & Goodwin, J. (1996). *Teaching pronunciation: A reference for teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hagen, S. & Grogan, P. (1992) *Sound Advantage*. New Jersey. USA: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Kelly, G. (2000). *How to teach pronunciation*. Harlow . UK: Pearson Education LTD.
- Swan, M. & Smith, B. (2001). *Learner English*. Cambridge. UK: Cambridge University Press.

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